

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 L-01 SP-02 INR-05 PM-03  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05 H-01 NSAE-00 /040 W  
-----098645 091744Z /45

R 091423Z JAN 78  
FM USMISSION USBERLIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5992  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USMISSION USNATO  
CINCEUR  
USNMR SHAPE  
USELEMENT LIVE OAK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 0051

LIMDIS

CINCEUR FOR POLAD AND OPS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3  
TAGS: PGOV, MILI, BQG, AKB  
SUBJECT: INTERSECTOR ACCESS: ALLIED OFFICIALS ACCREDITED TO GDR

REF: (A) STATE 003038 DTG 060129Z JAN 78, (B) 77 STATE  
310940 DTG 310037Z DEC 77, (C) BERLIN 8881 DTG 021624Z  
DEC 77 (NOTAL), (D) 77 USBERLIN 2814 DTG 101105Z NOV 77,  
(E) 65 BERLIN 1722 DTG UNKNOWN

SUMMARY: WE ALSO ARE PLEASED WITH RESULTS OF HOLIDAY CON-  
TINGENCY PLANNING. FRENCH HAVE REPORTED RECENT ADDITIONAL  
INDICATION OF ATTEMPTS TO CHIP AWAY AT ALLIED STATUS. USE  
OF BMG CARDS BY BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICIALS IN EAST BERLIN  
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DEVELOPED FOR REASONS OF CONVENIENCE AND NOW HAS SOVIET BLESSING  
ALTHOUGH BRITISH IN WEST BERLIN THINK PRACTICE HAS SOME  
POTENTIAL DANGER IN IT. FRENCH HAVE DECIDED NOT TO  
FOLLOW PRACTICE OF ISSUING FRENCH EQUIVALENT OF BMG  
CARD TO FRENCH EMBASSY PERSONNEL IN EAST BERLIN. WE  
THINK USE OF DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS FOR INTERSECTOR  
ACCESS IS WELL-ESTABLISHED BY CURRENT LEVEL OF USE.

WE WOULD PREFER TO AVOID THE TERMINOLOGY DIPLOMATIC  
"FLASH" PROCEDURE. END SUMMARY.

1. MISSION TOO IS HIGHLY PLEASED AT THE FAST REACTIONS  
AND EXCELLENT RESULTS PRODUCED BY THE HOLIDAY CONTIN-  
GENCY PLANNING ON WHAT TO DO IF THE GDR HAD CHANGED  
CHECKPOINT PROCEDURES. WE WOULD LIKE ESPECIALLY TO  
EXPRESS APPRECIATION TO THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVES TO  
THE BONN GROUP FOR HAVING SO EFFECTIVELY AND  
CONSTRUCTIVELY FOCUSED THE BONN GROUP'S ENERGIES ON  
A POTENTIAL PROBLEM, AND THAT AT A TIME WHEN MOST PEOPLE  
WERE THINKING OF THE UPCOMING HOLIDAYS. IN BERLIN,  
THERE CONTINUES TO BE A WIDELY HELD SUSPICION THAT SOMETHING WAS  
BEING PLANNED TOWARDS THE END OF THE YEAR.

2. BEYOND ALREADY REPORTED LIST OF INDICATIONS, WE  
LEARNED THAT THE SOVIET EXTERNAL RELATIONS BRANCH  
ALSO SAID INFORMALLY THAT A CHANGE IN THE DOCUMENTATION  
OF FRENCH MILITARY LIAISON MISSION MEMBERS WOULD BE  
MADE TO SHOW AREA OF ACCREDITATION AS THE GDR RATHER  
THAN THE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY OF CINC, GROUP  
SOVIET FORCES GERMANY, THE PRESENT FORMULATION. (A  
SIMILAR ATTEMPT TO ALTER U.S. DOCUMENTATION WAS REBUFFED  
BY CHIEF USMLM IN JUNE 1977.) AFTER TWO WEEKS HAD PASSED,  
AND DESPITE THIS INFORMAL SOVIET REMARK, THE MLM I.D.  
CARDS WERE SIMPLY RENEWED WITHOUT CHANGES.  
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3. RE USE OF BMG CARDS ("FLAG CARDS") BY BRITISH  
EMBASSY OFFICIALS IN EAST BERLIN. BRITISH DEP POLAD  
TOLD U.S. AND FRENCH DEP POLADS THAT PRACTICE HAD BEGUN  
WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF BRITISH MISSION IN WEST BERLIN.  
NEWLY ACCREDITED BRITISH DIPLOMATS HAD BEEN ISSUED  
BMG CARDS AT ADMIN SECTION OF BRITISH MILITARY GOVERN-  
MENT FOR USE IN WEST BERLIN. BRITISH EMBASSY, APPARENTLY  
AT ITS OWN INITIATIVE BEGAN USING THESE CARDS FOR TRANSITING  
SECTOR CROSSING POINTS, BASICALLY UNDER THREE CIRCUMSTANCES:

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USBERLIN 0051

LIMDIS

CINCEUR FOR POLAD AND OPS

(1) WHEN NEWLY ARRIVED OFFICIAL HAS NOT YET RECEIVED HIS GDR AUSWEIS; (2) WHEN AUSWEIS HAS BEEN TURNED IN FOR RENEWAL IN JANUARY; AND (3) FOR OFFICIAL VISITORS TO EMBASSY. LAST SPRING, WHEN BRITISH WERE ENCOUNTERING DIFFICULTIES IN USING PASSPORTS AT CHECKPOINTS, USE OF BMG CARD WAS ALSO CALLED INTO QUESTION. WEST BERLIN BRITISH THEN APPROACHED SOVIETS WHO EVENTUALLY AGREED TO USE OF BMG CARDS. WEST BERLIN BRITISH REMAIN QUESY ABOUT THE PRACTICE OF THEIR COLLEAGUES IN EAST BERLIN ON GROUNDS THAT IF THE GDR SHOULD DECIDE NOT TO ACCEPT BMG CARDS FOR IDENTIFICATION BY BRITISH OFFICIALS IN EAST BERLIN, THEY MIGHT ALSO INTERFERE WITH USE OF BMG CARDS BY ACTUAL MEMBERS OF BMG IN WEST BERLIN. CONFIDENTIAL

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4. DISCUSSION OF USE OF BMG CARDS BY THREE AMBASSADORS IN EAST BERLIN PROMPTLY LED TO REQUEST BY FRENCH AMBASSADOR BAYLE THAT FRENCH BE PERMITTED TO DO SAME AS BRITISH. HE WANTED A "GMB" (GOUVERNEMENT MILITAIRE DE BERLIN) CARD FOR HIMSELF. FRENCH MISSION IN WEST BERLIN IS VIGOROUSLY RESISTING THIS FRENCH REQUEST. AT DEPUTY POLADS' MEETING ON JANUARY 4, FRENCH DEP POLAD AGREED THAT PRINCIPAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST USE OF GMB CARD BY FRENCH OFFICIALS IN EAST BERLIN WERE: (A) IT IS AN UNNECESSARY INTRODUCTION

OF A NEW PRACTICE; AND (B) LIKE THE U.S., FRENCH EMBASSY OFFICIALS IN EAST BERLIN ALREADY HAVE TWO MEANS OF TRANSITING THE SECTOR CROSSING POINT--THE AUSWEIS AND THE FRENCH DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT.

5. WITH RESPECT TO THE QUESTION RAISED REF A, WE WILL OF COURSE BE VERY INTERESTED IN THE OPINION OF EMBASSY BERLIN. WE BELIEVE HOWEVER THAT EMBASSY PERSONNEL, MISSION PERSONNEL AND VISITORS TO BERLIN HAVE MADE RATHER REGULAR USE OF DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT PROCEDURE OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS SO THAT THE PRACTICE IS WELL-ESTABLISHED. WE DOUBT IF A WEEK GOES BY WITHOUT SEVERAL AMERICANS SHOWING BLACK PASSPORTS AT THE CROSSING POINTS. (PARA 2 OF REF C SUGGESTED RATE IS ABOUT ONE ROUND-TRIP CROSSING AT FRIEDRICHSTRASSE PER DAY.) THUS, OUR PRELIMINARY INCLINATION IS THAT TO INCREASE USE OF THE PROCEDURE OF DISPLAYING DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS WOULD NOT REALLY DO MUCH TOWARD REINFORCING A PRACTICE THAT ALREADY EXISTS, BUT MIGHT CONCEIVABLY STIR UP QUESTIONS WITHIN THE GDR BUREAUCRACY. FOR EXAMPLE, IF AN EMBASSY OFFICER KNOWN BY FACE TO THE SECTOR GUARDS AND WHO CONFIDENTIAL

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ALMOST INVARIABLY SHOWED HIS GDR AUSWEIS SHOULD SUDDENLY USE HIS DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT INSTEAD, THE GDR MIGHT QUESTION THE PROCEDURE. WE KNOW OF NO TRAVELLERS RECENTLY ENCOUNTERING DIFFICULTIES WITH THE DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT PROCEDURE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A VISITOR FROM EMBASSY BONN WHO WE UNDERSTAND WAS ASKED QUESTIONS BY THE GDR WHEN HE INADVERTENTLY WAS IN THE WRONG LINE IN FRIEDRICHSTRASSE BAHNHOF.

6. FOR THE RECORD, DURING THE EVENING OF JANUARY 2 MISSION OFFICER USED HIS DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT AS IDENTIFICATION WHEN WALKING THROUGH CHECKPOINT FRIEDRICHSTRASSE (OPPOSITE CHECKPOINT CHARLIE) ON ROUTE TO AND FROM OPERA IN EAST BERLIN.

7. YOU WILL NOTE THAT WE HAVE NOT USED THE TERMINOLOGY "DIPLOMATIC FLASH PROCEDURE." IT HAS NOT BEEN A PART OF OUR VOCABULARY SINCE THE YEAR IT WAS INTRODUCED, AND IT DOES NOT OCCUR IN THE ALLIED LEXICON. WE HAVE NOT USED IT WITH THE SOVIETS. ALSO, THE TERMINOLOGY MIGHT MISLEAD OUR OUT-OF-TOWN VISITORS. WHEN WE BRIEF VISITORS ABOUT CROSSING THE SECTOR LINE, WE SPEAK OF DISPLAYING THEIR PASSPORT FROM THE INTERIOR OF THE VEHICLE, THE LANGUAGE USED IN OBTAINING CONCURRENCE IN THE PROCEDURE FROM THE SOVIETS IN 1965 (REFS D AND E). WE THINK THE WORD "FLASH" COULD CAUSE SOME

VISITORS TO TAKE A RATHER FLIPPANT AND CAVALIER ATTITUDE  
TOWARDS THE GUARDS AT THE CHECKPOINT RATHER THAN A  
CORRECT ATTITUDE WHICH IS LEAST LIKELY TO CAUSE UN-  
NECESSARY ANNOYANCES.

8. USCOB CONCURS. GEORGE

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PGOV, MILI, BQG, AKB  
**To:** STATE BONN  
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